THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Wednesday, the 11th September 1946.

The House met in the Council Chamber, Fort St. George, at eleven of the clock, Mr. President (THE HON. SRI R. B. RAMAKRISHNA RAJU) in the Chair.

I.—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

STARRED QUESTIONS.

Pay and allowances of peons.

* 51 *Q.*—SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO : Will the Hon. the Prime Minister be pleased to state—

(*a*) what the present scale of pay of peons under the Government is;

(*b*) when this scale was fixed;

(*c*) what was the cost of living index in the City when the present scale was fixed;

(*d*) what is the present cost of living index in the City;

(*e*) whether they are paid any other allowances besides the pay and if so, what they are;

(*f*) whether it is a fact that there is considerable discontent in this service in regard to the present scale of pay;

(*g*) whether the Salaries Committee recommended any revised scale and if so, what it is;

(*h*) whether the Government have given effect to or propose to give effect to the recommendation of the Salaries Committee in regard to pay of peons;

(*i*) whether the peons are entitled to pension on retirement and, if so, whether it is, as in the case of other sections of the services, half their average emoluments;

(*j*) whether there is any distinction in rules governing pensions in respect of peons and those governing other services;

(*k*) what the recommendation of the Salaries Committee is in regard to pensions to peons; and

(*l*) whether the Government propose to take action on the recommendation of the Salaries Committee in regard to pay and pension of peons?

THE HON. SRI T. PRAKASAM :—" (*a*) The scale of pay at present is Rs. 12–17 to be drawn as follows :—

	RS.
First four years	12
Next four years	13
Next five years	14
Next six years	15
Next six years	16
Over 25 years	17

" Those in the City get a Presidency Allowance of Rs. 2–8–0 over and above their pay.

[11th September 1946

"(b) The scale was fixed in the year 1932–33.

"(c) The cost of living index in 1932–33 when this scale was fixed was about 100.

"(d) The present cost of living index is 238 in the Madras City.

"(e) The peons get in addition to pay in this scale, a dearness allowance of Rs. 16 per mensem. Peons in the Madras City get a Presidency Allowance of Rs. 2–8–0 each, to compensate them for the costliness of living in the city as compared with the mufassal.

"(f) Representations have been received for the improvement of their conditions of service, including conditions of pay and allowances.

"(g) Yes. The Madras Salaries Committee of 1945 recommended that the existing scale of pay of Rs. 12–17 may be raised to Rs. 16—1/4—24.

"(h) No effect has yet been given to the recommendation of the Salaries Committee. The Government have appointed a Committee of the Cabinet to examine and report on the question of revision of pay-scales of all classes of Government servants in receipt of salaries of Rs. 200 per mensem and below. The Committee will take into consideration the recommendations of the Salaries Committee as regards the pay of peons.

"(i) Peons are entitled to pension equal to half the emoluments drawn during the last 3 years of service, if they retire after rendering a service of 30 years or more. If they retire before, they are entitled to gratuity only at the following rates :—

Length of service.	Amount of gratuity.
Less than five years	Nil.
Not less than five years and less than ten years	Three months' pay.
Not less than ten years and less than fifteen years	Four months' pay.
Not less than fifteen years and less than twenty years	Five months' pay.
Not less than twenty years and less than thirty years	Six months' pay.

"(j) Yes.

"(k) The recommendation of the Salaries Committee was that peons should be treated as superior for purposes of pension and if for any reason this is not acceptable, Excise peons at least should be so treated, as their work is onerous and is comparable to that of a police constable.

"(l) Regarding 'Pay' please see question (h) regarding pension, there is no proposal yet to take any action on the Salaries Committee's recommendation. It was only on 27th April 1946 that Government issued orders making peons eligible for a pension equal to half their average emoluments during the last three years of their service as against a pension of Rs. 6 per mensem for which they were eligible before."

11th September 1946]

Sri R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" In view of the fact that it is clear from the answer that the Government themselves feel that the salaries paid to these peons are very meagre, may I ask, whether it is necessary that a Cabinet Committee should sit over this question and whether the Government themselves cannot take action on the recommendations of the Salaries Committee? "

The Hon. Sri T. PRAKASAM :—" The question is not audible. The hon. Member may repeat the question."

(The question was repeated.)

The Hon. Sri T. PRAKASAM :—" Sir, the usual practice has been adhered to."

ABDUL LATIF FAROOKHI SAHIB Bahadur :—" When does the Hon. the Premier expect the Cabinet Committee to make its report? "

The Hon. Sri T. PRAKASAM :—" Very soon, Sir. It ought to have met this morning but for the fact that this Council is meeting just now."

Sri P. R. K. SARMA :—" May I ask whether the Cabinet Sub-Committee has issued a questionnaire? "

The Hon. Sri T. PRAKASAM :—" Yes, Sir."

ABDUL LATIF FAROOKHI SAHIB Bahadur :—" May I ask whether the Hon. the Premier proposes to give any interim relief to these people before the Cabinet Sub-Committee makes its proposals? "

The Hon. Sri T. PRAKASAM :—" Perhaps they may come up to-morrow evening."

Sri P. R. K. SARMA :—" May I ask whether the questionnaire has been sent to some associations and organizations of Government workers to elicit their opinion? "

The Hon. Sri T. PRAKASAM :—" I do not believe it is necessary to send the questionnaire to these associations on a matter like this."

Sri R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" May I ask whether the peons will be allowed to make their representations to the Cabinet Sub-Committee, individually or collectively? "

The Hon. Sri T. PRAKASAM :—" Unless it is intended to delay the matter." (Laughter.)

Sri R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" How is the Cabinet Committee to know the grievances of these people unless an opportunity is given to these people to make their representations? "

The Hon. Sri T. PRAKASAM :—" This question and answer is quite enough."

[11th September 1946

SRI P. R. K. SARMA :—" May I ask whether the Government Press Workers' Union has not been sent a copy of the questionnaire? "

THE HON. SRI T. PRAKASAM :—" I do not think questions should be put on matters known to hon. Members."

SRI P. R. K. SARMA :—" My representation is this, and you will excuse me for making this. Copies of the questionnaire have been sent to one or two organizations but not to all Government workers' organizations."

THE HON. SRI T. PRAKASAM :—" Instead of putting that question it should not have gone round about."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" In view of the decisions announced by the Government in April that the peons will be allowed to draw a pension equal to half their average emoluments during the last three years of their service and as this concession will not be applicable to those who have already retired, will the Hon. Minister be pleased to state whether it will be made applicable to those who have already retired and are still alive? "

THE HON. SRI T. PRAKASAM :—" The hon. Member may put a separate question."

SRI P. R. K. SARMA :—" May I ask whether copies of the questionnaire will be supplied to the Members of the Legislature? "

THE HON. SRI T. PRAKASAM :—" If they consider it necessary they will be furnished."

MR. K. O. ANTHONI :—" May I know if the Cabinet Committee will consider the desirability of substituting a scale of dearness allowance linked to the cost of living index, in preference to the fixed scale? "

THE HON. SRI T. PRAKASAM :—" It will be taken into account."

SRI P. R. K. SARMA :—" May I know whether the Cabinet Sub-Committee have invited Mr. Town and others to give evidence before them? "

THE HON. SRI T. PRAKASAM :—" Yes, on certain matters on which Mr. Town's statement is required, he was summoned."

SRI R. SURAYANARAYANA RAO :—" Will the Cabinet Committee be willing to hear any Member of the Legislature if he wants to make representations on behalf of any group of workers? "

THE HON. SRI T. PRAKASAM :—" Certainly it would be so, but the discretion is with the Cabinet to decide."